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ACTION SCT-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-12	ACDE-00	AID-00	ARA-01	A-00	CA-02
	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	COME-00	CTME-00	OASY-00
	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-01	EUR-01
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00
	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NEA-01	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OCS-03	OIS-01	OMB-01	PA-02	PM-00	PRS-01	P-00
	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00
	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09	G-00	/039W	

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R 072104Z DEC 95
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9261
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCCC//
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 007668

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER, PGOV, AR
SUBJECT: AMIA: NEW TWISTS IN MILITARY CONNECTION
UNCLASSIFIED

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REF: BUENOS AIRES 7543

1. SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED -- DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT. HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.
2. SUMMARY: AMIA INVESTIGATING JUDGE JUAN JOSE GALEANO ORDERED THE ARREST OF AN ADDITIONAL SUSPECT ON DECEMBER 4 AND RELEASED THREE OF THOSE DETAINED LAST WEEK. POLICE CONDUCTING ANOTHER RAID ON DECEMBER 6 WERE CALLED OFF WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE HOUSE BELONGED TO NATIONAL DEPUTY EMILIO PEDRO MORELLO, A FORMER ARMY OFFICER ALIGNED WITH THE "CARAPINTADA" GROUP; MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE BROAD IMMUNITIES FROM CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION. CONFLICTING STATEMENTS BY

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GALEANO'S TEAM ARE LEADING TO INCREASED SKEPTICISM OVER HOW SIGNIFICANT THE LATEST LINE OF INQUIRY WILL BE IN REVEALING THE IDENTITIES OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE 1994 TERRORIST ATTACK. END SUMMARY.

3. SINCE THE 13 ARRESTS LAST WEEK (REFTEL), JUDGE JUAN JOSE GALEANO HAS SAID LITTLE PUBLICLY ABOUT THE EVIDENCE OF ANY CONNECTION OF THOSE ARRESTED WITH THE PERPETRATORS OF THE 1994 BOMBING OF THE ARGENTINE JEWISH MUTUAL ASSOCIATION (AMIA). GALEANO, HOWEVER, ORDERED THE ARREST ON DECEMBER 4 OF ANOTHER ARMY SERGEANT AND CONTINUED THE INTERROGATIONS OF THE OTHER DETAINEES. THREE OF THOSE WERE RELEASED FROM CUSTODY BECAUSE THEIR LINK TO THE ALLEGED ARMS RING AT THE CAMPO DE MAYO MILITARY BASE WAS ONLY CIRCUMSTANTIAL.

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4. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION OVER THE STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE LINKING THE ARRESTEES AND THE AMIA BOMBERS. STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO GALEANO, LEAD PROSECUTOR EAMON MULLEN, AND THE POLICE HAVE BEEN UNCOORDINATED IF NOT CONTRADICTORY. WHILE ON THE ONE HAND POLICE AND GALEANO ARE SAYING THERE IS "SUFFICIENT" EVIDENCE OF THE CONNECTION, MULLEN HAS BEEN HEDGING ON THE ISSUE. ON DECEMBER 6, MULLEN WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT "IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR THE PUBLIC TO CONCLUDE THAT THE CASE WILL BE ENTIRELY CLEARED UP BY TESTIMONY FROM THE NEWLY DETAINED SUSPECTS IN THE ARMS RING."

5. THE POTENTIAL MILITARY CONNECTION TO THE AMIA CASE HAS TAKEN SOME UNEXPECTED TURNS, HOWEVER. POLICE LATE WEDNESDAY WERE ORDERED TO SEARCH A HOUSE IN BELLA VISTA, A SUBURB OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL IN BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE. WHEN THEY ARRIVED, THEY DISCOVERED THAT THE HOUSE BELONGED TO EMILIO PEDRO MORELLO, A NATIONAL DEPUTY FROM THE PARTY FOR NATIONAL DIGNITY AND INDEPENDENCE (MODIN). BECAUSE CONGRESS MEMBERS ARE GRANTED RATHER BROAD IMMUNITIES, GALEANO ORDERED THE SEARCH SUSPENDED IMMEDIATELY AFTER IT WAS LEARNED WHO OWNED THE HOUSE. MORELLO WAS PART OF THE "CARAPINTADA" GROUP WHEN HE WAS A CAPTAIN IN THE ARMY BEFORE BEING SENT INTO EARLY RETIREMENT IN OCTOBER 1989. THE CARAPINTADAS, LED BY FORMER LIEUTENANT CORONEL ALDO RICO, STAGED SHORT UPRISINGS IN THE LATE 1980S AND ARE CONSIDERED A RIGHT-WING FRINGE GROUP IN THE MILITARY. RICO NOW LEADS MODIN AND, LIKE MORELLO, REPRESENTS

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BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE IN THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF
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DEPUTIES. FOLLOWING PRESIDENT CARLOS MENEM'S GRANT OF
AMNESTY TO THE CARAPINTADAS AND OTHER MILITARY
OFFICIALS IN 1989, MORELLO JOINED MODIN AND RAN
SUCCESSFULLY FOR CONGRESS ON A THE MODIN TICKET IN
1993. HIS TERM RUNS UNTIL 1997. MORELLO LED MODIN TO
A CRUSHING DEFEAT IN THIS YEAR'S RACE FOR THE
GOVERNORSHIP OF BUENOS AIRES.

6. ALTHOUGH GALEANO AND THE POLICE ARE NOT SAYING,
THE INFORMATION ON MORELLO'S HOUSE PROBABLY CAME FROM
FORMER CARAPINTADA SERGEANT JORGE PACIFICO, ONE OF
THOSE ARRESTED LAST WEEK AT CAMPO DE MAYO. PACIFICO
REPORTEDLY HELD A POSITION AS AN ADVISOR TO MODIN
LEADERS BEFORE HIS ARREST. MORELLO, CORNERED BY
TELEVISION CREWS LATE WEDNESDAY NIGHT, DENIED ANY
CONNECTION TO THE AMIA CASE AND ACCUSED GALEANO OF
CONDUCTING RAIDS INDISCRIMINATELY IN HIS SEARCH FOR
NEW LEADS.

7. COMMENT: THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN PROSECUTOR EAMON
MULLEN'S STATEMENTS AND THOSE OF THE OTHERS INVOLVED
IN THE CASE IS RAISING DOUBTS OVER HOW FAR THIS LATEST
LINE OF INQUIRY IN THE INVESTIGATION WILL GO.
ALTHOUGH STILL PRAISING GALEANO'S LATEST MOVES, JEWISH
LEADERS ARE QUICK TO POINT OUT THE HYPE THAT

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SURROUNDED THE LAST SET OF ARRESTS -- THE CAR RING THAT SUPPOSEDLY FURNISHED THE VAN IN THE TERRORIST ATTACK -- YIELDED FEW RESULTS. THERE IS THE DANGER THAT, WITHOUT RESULTS HERE, GALEANO WILL BE PERCEIVED AS SETTING A PATTERN OF PURSUING FRUITLESS LEADS FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT CONGRESS, WHICH ENDS ITS REGULAR SESSION TODAY, WOULD ACT TO REMOVE MORELLO'S IMMUNITY BEFORE ITS NEXT REGULAR SESSION BEGINS IN MARCH 1996, EVEN IF GALEANO HAS FIRM EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM. EVEN THEN, LIFTING IMMUNITY WOULD REQUIRE A VERY STRONG CASE.

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